

THE MIAMI HERALD

Corelli's an Italian gem in Lauderdale-By-The-Sea

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If you're a fan of Italian food — and who isn't? — here's a scouting report on three places to consider in East Broward.

CORELLI'S

Tucked in a strip shopping center on the edge of Lauderdale-by-the-Sea, this gem was opened by the Affrunti family after they relocated from Georgia six years ago. The recipes are Mama Corelli's old country favorites from Sicily and Naples, and you'll find family members in the kitchen and waiting tables.



FAMILY AFFAIR: Owners Cindy, David and Joe Affrunti present an array of dishes at Corelli's Pizza and Pasta in Lauderdale-By-The-Sea.

The tiny dining room doubles as a deli and shop, with little breathing room between the eight tables and a selection of wines and other Italian imports for sale. The atmosphere is bare bones, with food in the starring role.

Choose from classic protein preparations like marsala, parmigiana and française and pasta dishes like lasagna, manicotti and stuffed shells. Can't decide? Go for a Tour of Italy or Tour of Sicily combo platter. No matter what you order, portions are huge; pay the \$4 sharing charge or expect to take home enough for another meal.

A giant bowl of Italian wedding soup was a meal in itself with loads of tiny meatballs, chunks of chicken, spinach and pasta. The chicken marsala was among the best we've had, with just the right balance of marsala wine. The lasagna was also first rate, as was a huge slice of New York-style thin-crust pizza.

Along with your leftovers, take home a jar of Corelli's homemade sauce or a bottle of their vinaigrette. We can't wait to go back.

Corelli's Pizza & Pasta, 256 Commercial Blvd., Lauderdale-By-The-Sea; 954-229-1947, www.corellisitalianfood.com; starters \$4.95-\$11.95, pasta \$14.95-\$17.95, entrees \$17.95-\$23.95, pizza \$14.95-\$21.95